# THE BIBLE

## AND OTHER SACRED BOOKS

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MILTON S. TERRY, D.D.

*Professor in Garrett Biblical Institute*

# THE BIBLE AND OTHER SACRED BOOKS

## A CONTRIBUTION

TO THE STUDY OF

# APOLOGETICS AND COMPARATIVE THEOLOGY


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MILTON S. TERRY, D.D.

*Professor in Garrett Biblical Institute*

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# THE BIBLE AND OTHER SACRED BOOKS.

Other religious literatures a valuable preparation for hermeneutical study.

It has become an important preparation for the profitable study of the Bible to be able to appreciate its rank and value as compared with other sacred books. During the last half century the learned research and diligent labour of scholars have made accessible to us whole literatures of nations that were comparatively unknown before. It is discovered that the ancient Egyptians, the Persians, the Hindus, the Chinese, and other nations, have had their sacred writings, some of which claim an antiquity greater than the books of Moses. There are not wanting, in Christian lands, men disposed to argue that these sacred books of the nations possess a value as great as the scriptures of the Christian faith, and are entitled to the same veneration. Such claims are not to be ignored or treated with contempt. There have been, doubtless, savage islanders who imagined that the sun rose and set for their sole benefit, and who never dreamed that the sounding waters about their island home were at the same time washing beautiful corals and precious pearls on other shores. Among civilized peoples, also, there are those who have no appreciation of lands, nations, literatures, and religions which differ from their own. This, however, is a narrowness unworthy of the Christian scholar. The truly catholic Christian will not refuse to acknowledge the manifest excellences of races or religions that differ from his own. He will be governed in his judgments by the precept of the apostle (Phil. iv, 8): "Whatever things are true, whatever things are worthy of honour (*σεμνά*), whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think upon (*λογίζεσθε*, *exercise reason upon*) these things." The study and comparison of other scriptures will serve, among other things, to show how pre-eminently the Christian's Bible is adapted to the spiritual nature and religious culture of all mankind.[1]

[1] "This volume," says Professor Phelps, "has never yet numbered among its religious believers a fourth part of the human race, yet it has swayed a greater amount of mind than any other volume the world has known. It has the singular faculty of attracting to itself the thinkers of the world, either as friends or as foes, always and everywhere." Men and Books, p. 239. New York, 1882.

## Literature of the Christian Canon.

Outline of Biblical Literature as contained in the Christian Canon.

The scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the gradual accretion of a literature that covers about sixteen centuries. The different parts were contributed at different times, and by many different hands. According to the order of books in the Christian Canon, we have, first, the five Books of Moses, which embody the Ten Commandments, with their various accessory statutes, moral, civil, and ceremonial, all set in a historical background of singular simplicity and grandeur. Then follow twelve Historical Books, recording the history of the Israelitish nation from the death of Moses to the restoration from Babylonian exile, and covering a period of a thousand years. Next follow five Poetical Books—a drama, a psalter, two books of proverbial philosophy, and a song of love; and after these are seventeen Prophetical Books, among which are some of the most magnificent monuments of all literature. In the New Testament we have, first, the four Gospels, which record the life and words of Jesus Christ; then the Acts of the Apostles, a history of the origin of the Christian Church; then the thirteen Epistles of Paul, followed by the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the seven General Epistles; and, finally, the Apocalypse of John. Here, at a rapid glance, we see an ancient library of history, law, theology, philosophy, poetry, prophecy, epistles, and biography. Most of these books still bear their author's names, some of whom we find to have been kings, some prophets, some shepherds, some fishermen. One was a taxgatherer, another a tentmaker, another a physician, but all were deeply versed in sacred things. There could have been no collusion among them, for they lived and wrote in different ages, centuries apart, and their places of residence were far separate, as Arabia, Palestine, Babylon, Persia, Asia Minor, Greece, and Rome.[1] The antiquities and varying civilizations of these different nations and countries are imaged in these sacred books, and, where the name of an author is not known, it is not difficult to ascertain approximately, from his statements or allusions, the time and circumstances of his writing. The nation with whom these books originated, and the lands that nation occupied first and last, are so well known, and so accurately identified, as to give a living freshness and reality to

[1] Geike says: "Scripture proves throughout to be only so many notes in a divine harmony which culminates in the angel song over Bethlehem. What less than Divine inspiration could have evolved such unity of purpose and spirit in the long series of sacred writers, no one of whom could possibly be conscious of the part he was being made to take in the development of God's ways to our race?" Hours with the Bible, vol. i, p. 5.

these records; and the rich and varied contents of the several books are such as to make them of priceless value to all men and all ages. "I am of opinion," wrote Sir William Jones—a most competent judge on such a subject—"that this volume, independently of its divine origin, contains more true sublimity, more exquisite beauty, more pure morality, more important history, and finer strains of poetry and eloquence, than can be collected from all other books, in whatever age or language they may have been written."[1] Let us now compare and contrast these scriptures with the sacred books of other nations.

## The Avesta.

No body of sacred literature except the Christian Canon can be of much greater interest to the student of history than the scriptures of the Parsees, which are commonly called the Zend-Avesta. They contain the traditions and ceremonies of the old Iranian faith, the religion of Zoroaster, or (more properly) Zarathustra. They have sadly suffered by time and the revolutions of empire, and come to us greatly mutilated and corrupted, but since they were first brought to the knowledge of the western world by the enthusiastic Frenchman, Anquetil-Duperron,[2] whose adventures in the East read like a romance from the Arabian Nights, the studies of European scholars have put us in possession of their general scope and subject matter.[3] They consist of four distinct sections, the Yasna, the Vispered, the Vendidad, and a sort of separate hagiographa, commonly called Khordah-Avesta.

Antiquity and general character.

The main principles of the Avesta religion are thus summed up by Darmesteter: "The world, such as it is now, is twofold, being the work of two hostile beings, Ahura-Mazda, the good principle, and Angra-Mainyu, the evil principle; all that is good in the world comes from the former, all

Doctrinal system of the Avesta.

[1] Written on a blank leaf of his Bible.

[2] In his work entitled, Zend-Avesta, ouvrage de Zoroastre, contenant les Idées Théologiques, Physiques et Morales de ce Législateur, 3 vols., Par., 1771.

[3] Especially deserving of mention are Eugéne Burnouf, Commentaire sur le Yaçna, 3 vols., Par., 1833; Westergaard, Zendavesta, Copenh., 1852–54; Spiegel, who has published the original text, with a full critical apparatus, and also a German translation, with a commentary on both the text and translation, Lpz., 1853–1868; Haug, Essays on the Sacred Language, Writings, and Religion of the Parsees, Bombay, 1862; also Die Gathas des Zarathustra, Lpz., 1858; Windischmann, Zoroastrische Studien, Berl., 1863. An English version of the Avesta from Spiegel's German version, by A. H. Bleek, was published in London, in 1864, and a better one from the original text by J. Darmesteter and L. H. Mills, in vols. iv, xxiii and xxxi of the Sacred Books of the East, edited by Max Müller.

that is bad in it comes from the latter. The history of the world is the history of their conflict, how Angra-Mainyu invaded the world of Ahura-Mazda and marred it, and how he shall be expelled from it at last. Man is active in the conflict, his duty in it being laid before him in the law revealed by Ahura-Mazda to Zarathustra. When the appointed time is come, a son of the lawgiver, still unborn, named Saoshyant, will appear, Angra-Mainyu and Hell will be destroyed, men will rise from the dead, and everlasting happiness will reign over the world."[1]

The Yasna.

The oldest portion of the Avesta is called the Yasna, which, along with the Vispered, constitutes the Parsee Liturgy, and consists of praises of Ahura-Mazda, and all the lords of purity, and of invocations for them to be present at the ceremonial worship. Many of these prayers contain little more than the names and attributes of the several objects or patrons of the Zoroastrian worship, and the perusal of them soon becomes tedious. The following constitutes the whole of the twelfth chapter, and is one of the finest passages, and a favourite:

I praise the well-thought, well-spoken, well-performed thoughts, words, and works. I lay hold on all good thoughts, words, and works. I abandon all evil thoughts, words, and works. I bring to you, O Amesha-Spentas,[2] praise and adoration, with thoughts, words, and works, with heavenly mind, the vital strength of my own body.

The following, from the beginning of the thirteenth chapter, is another favourite:

I drive away the dævas (demons), I profess myself a Zarathustrian, an expeller of dævas, a follower of Ahura, a hymn-singer of the Amesha-Spentas, a praiser of the Amesha-Spentas. To Ahura-Mazda, the Good, endued with good wisdom, I offer all good. To the Pure, Rich, Majestic; whatever are the best goods to him, to whom the cow, to whom purity belongs; from whom arises the light, the brightness which is inseparable from the lights. Spenta-Armaiti, the good, choose I; may she belong to me! By my praise will I save the cattle from theft and robbery.

The Gathas.

The latter part of the Yasna contains the religious hymns known as the Gathas. They are believed to be the oldest portion of the Avesta, and are written in a more ancient dialect. But a considerable part of them is scarcely intelligible, all the learning and labour of scholars having thus far failed to clear up

[1] Darmesteter, Translation of the Avesta, Introduction, p. lvi.

[2] The Amesha-Spentas, six in number, were at first mere personifications of virtues and moral or liturgical powers; but as Ahura-Mazda, their lord and father, ruled over the whole of the world, they took by and by each a part of the world under their care. Comp. Darmesteter, p. lxxi.

the difficulties of the ancient text. The general drift of thought, however, is apparent. Praises are continually addressed to the holy powers, especially to the Holy Spirit Ahura-Mazda (Ormuzd), the Creator, the Rejoicer, the Pure, the Fair, the Heavenly, the Ruler over all, the Most Profitable, the Friend for both worlds. Many a noble sentiment is uttered in these ancient hymns, but, at the same time, a much larger amount of frivolous matter.

The Vispered is but a liturgical addition to the Yasna, and of similar character. It contains twenty-seven chapters, of which the following, from the eighth chapter, is a specimen: The Vispered.

> The right-spoken words praise we.
> The holy Sraosha praise we.
> The good purity praise we.
> Nairo-Sanha praise we.
> The victorious peaces praise we.
> The undaunted, who do not come to shame, praise we.
> The Fravashis (souls) of the pure praise we.
> The bridge Chinvat[1] praise we.
> The dwelling of Ahura-Mazda praise we.
> The best place of the pure praise we,
> The shining, wholly brilliant.
> The best-arriving at Paradise praise we.

The Vendidad, consisting of twenty-two chapters, or fargards, is of a different character. It is a minute code of Zoroastrian laws, most of which, however, refer to matters of purification. The first fargard enumerates the countries which were created by Ahura-Mazda, and afterward corrupted by the evil principle, Angra-Mainyu, who is full of death and opposition to the good. The second introduces us to Yima, the fair, who refused to be the teacher, recorder, or bearer of the law, but became the protector and overseer of the world. Chapter third enumerates things which are most acceptable and most displeasing to the world; and chapter fourth describes breaches of contracts and other sins, and prescribes the different degrees of punishment for each, declaring, among other things, that a man's nearest relatives may become involved in his punishment, even to a thousandfold. Chapters fifth to twelfth treat uncleanness occasioned by contact with dead bodies, and the means of purification. Chapters thirteenth and fourteenth praise the dog, and heavy punishments are enjoined for those who injure the animal so important and valuable to a pastoral people. Fargards fifteenth and sixteenth give laws for the treatment of The Vendidad.

[1] Over which the good are supposed to pass into Paradise.

women, and condemn seduction and attempts to procure abortion. Fargard seventeenth gives directions concerning paring the nails and cutting the hair. The remaining five chapters contain numerous conversations between Ahura-Mazda and Zoroaster, and appear to be fragmentary additions to the original Vendidad.

The Khordah-Avesta.

The rest of the Parsee scriptures are comprehended under what is commonly called the Khordah-Avesta, that is, the small Avesta. This part contains the Yashts and Nyayis, prayers and praises addressed to the various deities of the Zoroastrian faith; also the Aferin and Afrigan, praises and thanksgivings; the Sirozah, praises to the deities of the thirty days of the month; the Gahs, prayers to the different subdivisions of the day; and the Patets, or formularies of confession.

These praises and prayers of the small Avesta are intended for the use of the people, as those of the Yasna and Vispered are principally for the priests. Taken altogether, these Parsee scriptures are a prayer-book, or ritual, rather than a bible. But though they are associated with the venerable name of Zoroaster, and tradition has it that he composed two million verses, yet nothing in this volume can with certainty be ascribed to him, and he himself is a dim and mythical personage. In all these writings there is a vagueness and uncertainty about subject matter, date, and authorship. Darmesteter says: "As the Parsees are the ruins of a people, so are their sacred books the ruins of a religion. There has been no other great belief in the world that ever left such poor and meagre monuments of its past splendor."[1]

## Assyrian Sacred Records.

Vast range of literature in cuneiform inscriptions.

The cuneiform inscriptions on the monuments of the Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian empires have been found to embody a vast literature, embracing history, law, science, poetry, and religion. To the interpretation of these monumental records a number of eminent orientalists,[2] chiefly English and French, have been, within the last half century, devoting unwearied study, and many of the most interesting inscriptions have been deciphered and translated into the languages of modern Europe. At the date of the earliest monumental records, two different races appear to have settled upon the plains of the Euphrates and Tigris, one using a Semitic, the other a Scythian or Turanian

[1] Translation of the Zend-Avesta; Introduction, p. xii.

[2] Among the most distinguished Assyriologists are Rawlinson, Hincks, Norris, George Smith, Talbot, Sayce, Botta, De Saulcy, Oppert, Lenormant, Menant, and Schrader.

language. They are designated by the names Sumir and Akkad, but what particular sections of the country each inhabited, or which particular language each spoke, does not appear.[1] They were, probably, much intermixed, as many of their cities bear both Semitic and Scythian names. "The Accadians," says Sayce, "were the inventors of the cuneiform system of writing, and the earliest population of Babylonia of whom we know. They spoke an agglutinative language, allied to Finnic or Tartar, and had originally come from the mountainous country to the southwest of the Caspian. The name *Accada* signifies 'highlander,' and the name of Accad is met with in the tenth chapter of Genesis."[2] The successive Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian conquerors adopted the Accadian system of writing, and it became variously modified by each.

Inscriptions deciphered mostly fragmentary.

The inscriptions thus far deciphered are mostly fragmentary, and the study of them has not yet been carried far enough to furnish a full account of all the tribes and languages they represent. But enough has already been placed within the reach of English readers to show that those ancient peoples had an extensive sacred literature. Their prayers and hymns and laws were graven on monumental tablets, often on the high rocks, and they are worthy to be compared with the sacred books of other lands and nations.[3]

Religious tone of the royal inscriptions.

The royal inscriptions on these monuments are noticeable for their religious character. Though full of most pompous self assertion they abound with devout acknowledgments, showing that those ancient monarchs never hesitated to confess their dependence on the powers above. Witness the following inscription of Khammurabi, who ruled in Babylonia some centuries before the time of Moses:

Khammurabi the exalted king, the king of Babylon, the king renowned throughout the world; conqueror of the enemies of Marduk; the king beloved by his heart am I.

[1] "The Turanian people," says George Smith, "who appear to have been the original inhabitants of the country, invented the cuneiform mode of writing; all the earliest inscriptions are in that language, but the proper names of most of the kings and principal persons are written in Semitic, in direct contrast to the body of the inscriptions. The Semites appear to have conquered the Turanians, although they had not yet imposed their language on the country." Records of the Past, vol. iii, p. 3.

[2] Preface to his translation of a Tablet of Ancient Accadian Laws, Records of the Past, vol. iii, p. 21.

[3] A very convenient and valuable collection of these inscriptions, translated into English by leading oriental scholars, is published by Bagster & Sons, of London, under the title of Records of the Past (12 volumes, 1875–1881). Every alternate volume of the series contains translations from the Egyptian monuments.

The favour of god and Bel the people of Sumir and Accad gave unto my government. Their celestial weapons unto my hand they gave.

The canal Khammurabi, the joy of men, a stream of abundant waters, for the people of Sumir and Accad, I excavated. Its banks, all of them, I restored to newness; new supporting walls I heaped up; perennial waters for the people of Sumir and Accad I provided.

The people of Sumir and Accad, all of them, in general assemblies I assembled. A review and inspection of them I ordained every year. In joy and abundance I watched over them, and in peaceful dwellings I caused them to dwell.

By the divine favour I am Khammurabi the exalted king, the worshipper of the Supreme deity.

With the prosperous power which Marduk gave me I built a lofty citadel, on a high mound of earth, whose summits rose up like mountains, on the banks of Khammurabi river, the joy of men.

To that citadel I gave the name of the mother who bore me and the father who begat me. In the holy name of Ri, the mother who bore me, and of the father who begat me, during long ages may it last![1]

Similar devout acknowledgments are found in nearly all the royal annals. Sargon's great inscription on the palace of Khorsabad declares:

The gods Assur, Nebo, and Merodach have conferred on me the royalty of the nations, and they have propagated the memory of my fortunate name to the ends of the earth. . . . The great gods have made me happy by the constancy of their affection, they have granted me the exercise of my sovereignty over all kings.[2]

Specimens of psalms and prayers.

Other tablets contain a great variety of compositions. There are mythological stories, fables, proverbs, laws, contracts, deeds of sale, lists of omens and charms, legends of deities and spirits, and speculations in astrology. Not the least interesting among these records are the old Accadian and Assyrian hymns. Some of these remind us of the hymns of the Rig-Veda. Some have the tone of penitential psalms. The following is one of the best examples:

O my Lord! my sins are many, my trespasses are great;
And the wrath of the gods has plagued me with disease,
And with sickness and sorrow.
I fainted, but no one stretched forth his hand;
I groaned, but no one drew nigh;
I cried aloud, but no one heard.

[1] Translation by H. F. Talbot, Records of the Past, vol. i, pp. 7, 8.

[2] Records of the Past, vol. ix, p. 3.

O Lord! do not abandon thy servant.
In the waters of the great storm seize his hand.
The sins which he has committed, turn thou to righteousness.[1]

The following prayer for a king is interesting both as an example of Assyrian sacred poetry, and as evidence of a belief in immortality:

Length of days,
Long-lasting years,
A strong sword,
A long life,
Extended years of glory,
Pre-eminence among kings,
Grant ye to the king, my lord,
Who has given such gifts to his gods!
The bounds vast and wide
Of his empire and of his rule
May he enlarge and may he complete.
Holding over all kings supremacy,
And royalty and empire,
May he attain to gray hairs and old age;
And after the life of these days,
In the feasts of the silver mountain,[2]
The heavenly courts,
The abode of blessedness,
And in the light of the Happy Fields,
May he dwell a life eternal, holy,
In the presence of the gods
Who inhabit Assyria.[3]

Chaldean accounts of Creation, etc.

The following Chaldean account of the Creation is a translation, by H. F. Talbot, of the first and fifth Creation Tablets, which are preserved, though in a mutilated condition, in the British Museum:

*From the First Tablet.*

When the upper region was not yet called heaven,
And the lower region was not yet called earth,
And the abyss of Hades had not yet opened its arms,
Then the chaos of waters gave birth to all of them,
And the waters were gathered into one place.
No men yet dwelt together; no animals yet wandered about;

[1] Records of the Past, vol. iii, p. 136.

[2] The Assyrian Olympus. The epithet *silver* was doubtless suggested by some snowy inaccessible peak, the supposed dwelling-place of the gods.

[3] Translated by Talbot, Records of the Past, vol. iii, pp. 133, 134.

None of the gods had yet been born,
Their names were not spoken; their attributes were not known.
Then the eldest of the gods,
Lakhmu and Lakhamu were born,
And grew up. . . .[1]
Assur and Kissur were born next,
And lived through long periods.
Anu. . . .[2]

*From the Fifth Tablet.*

He constructed dwellings for the great gods.
He fixed up constellations, whose figures were like animals.
He made the year. Into four quarters he divided it.
Twelve months he established, with their constellations, three by three.
And for days of the year he appointed festivals.
He made dwellings for the planets; for their rising and setting.
And that nothing should go amiss, and that the course of none should be retarded,
He placed with them the dwellings of Bel and Hea.
He opened great gates on every side;
He made strong the portals, on the left hand and on the right.
In the centre he placed luminaries.
The moon he appointed to rule the night,
And to wander through the night, until the dawn of day.
Every month without fail he made holy assembly days.
In the beginning of the month, at the rising of the night,
It shot forth its horns to illuminate the heavens.
On the seventh day he appointed a holy day,
And to cease from all business he commanded.
Then arose the sun in the horizon of heaven in (glory).[3]

The mention here made of the seventh day as a holy day is important to the biblical theologian. "It has been known for some time," says Talbot, "that the Babylonians observed the Sabbath with considerable strictness. On that day the king was not allowed to take a drive in his chariot; various meats were forbidden to be eaten, and there were a number of other minute restrictions. But it was not known that they believed the Sabbath to have been ordained at the Creation. I have found, however, since this translation of the fifth tablet was completed, that Mr. Sayce has recently published a similar opinion."

[1] Lacunæ. [2] The rest of this tablet is lost.

[3] Records of the Past, vol. ix, pp. 117, 118. Compare the translation and comments of George Smith, Chaldæan Account of Genesis. New York, 1876. New Edition, revised, 1880.

The following Accadian poem is supposed to be an ancient tradition of the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah. Mr. Sayce, whose translation is here given, observes that "it seems merely a fragment of a legend, in which the names of the cities were probably given, and an explanation afforded of the mysterious personage, who, like Lot, appears to have escaped destruction. It must not be forgotten that the campaign of Chedorlaomer and his allies was directed against Sodom and the other cities of the plain, so that the existence of the legend among the Accadians is not so surprising as might appear at first sight."

Accadian legend of Sodom and Gomorrah.

An overthrow from the midst of the deep there came.
The fated punishment from the midst of heaven descended.
A storm like a plummet the earth (overwhelmed).
To the four winds the destroying flood like fire did burn.
The inhabitants of the cities it had caused to be tormented; their bodies it consumed.
In city and country it spread death, and the flames as they rose overthrew.
Freeman and slave were equal, and the high places it filled.
In heaven and earth like a thunder-storm it had rained; a prey it made.
A place of refuge the gods hastened to, and in a throng collected.
Its mighty (onset) they fled from, and like a garment it concealed (mankind).
They (feared), and death (overtook them).
(Their) feet and hands (it embraced).
Their body it consumed.
. . . [1] the city, its foundation, it defiled.
. . . [1] in breath, his mouth he filled.
As for this man, a loud voice was raised; the mighty lightning flash descended.
During the day it flashed; grievously (it fell).[2]

Similar to the above in general tone and character are the cuneiform accounts of the Deluge and the Tower of Babel. They are especially valuable in showing how the traditions of most ancient events were preserved among the scattered nations, and became modified in the course of ages. Notably inferior are these poetic legends to the calm and stately narratives of the book of Genesis, but they are, nevertheless, to be greatly prized. Were Assyriologists to gather up, classify, and arrange in proper order the religious records of ancient Assyria and Babylonia, it would be seen that these hoary annals and hymns of departed nations furnish a sacred literature second in interest and value to none of the bibles of the Gentiles.

[1] Lacunæ. [2] Records of the Past, vol. xi, pp. 115–118.

## The Veda.

The word Veda means knowledge, and is the Sanskrit equivalent of the Greek *οἶδα, I know.* It is often used to denote the entire body of Hindu sacred literature, which, according to the Brahmans, contains pre-eminently the knowledge which is important and worthy to be known. But the Vedas proper exist chiefly in the form of lyrical poetry, and consist of four distinct collections known as the Rig-Veda, the Sama-Veda, the Yajur-Veda, and the Atharva-Veda. These hymns are called Mantras, as distinguished from the prose annotations and disquisitions (Brahmanas), which were subsequently added to them. They are written in a dialect much older than the classical Sanskrit, and are allowed on all hands to be among the most ancient and important monuments of literature extant in any nation or language. The four collections differ much, however, in age and value. The Rig-Veda is the oldest and most important, and consists of one thousand and twenty-eight hymns. Nearly half the hymns are addressed to either Indra, the god of light, or Agni, the god of fire. According to Professor Whitney, it "is doubtless a historical collection, prompted by a desire to treasure up complete, and preserve from further corruption, those ancient and inspired songs which the Indian nation had brought with them, as their most precious possession, from the earlier seats of the race."[1] The Sama-Veda is a liturgical collection, consisting largely of hymns from the Rig-Veda, but arranged for ritual purposes. The Yajur-Veda is of a similar character, and consists of various formulas in prose and verse arranged for use at sacrificial services. The Atharva-Veda is the work of a later period, and never attained in India a rank equal to that of the other Vedas. In fact, says Max Müller, "for tracing the earliest growth of religious ideas in India, the only important, the only real Veda, is the Rig-Veda. The other so-called Vedas, which deserve the name of Veda no more than the Talmud deserves the name of Bible, contain chiefly extracts from the Rig-Veda, together with sacrificial formulas, charms, and incantations, many of them, no doubt, extremely curious, but never likely to interest any one except the Sanskrit scholar by profession."[2]

General character of the Vedas.

Max Müller's views of the Rig-Veda.

The same distinguished scholar elsewhere observes: "The Veda has a twofold interest; it belongs to the history of the world and

[1] Oriental and Linguistic Studies, p. 13. New York, 1873.

[2] Chips from a German Workshop, vol. i, p. 8.

to the history of India. In the history of the world the Veda fills a gap which no literary work in any other language could fill. It carries us back to times of which we have no records anywhere, and gives us the very words of a generation of men of whom otherwise we could form but the vaguest estimate by means of conjectures and inferences. As long as man continues to take an interest in the history of his race, and as long as we collect in libraries and museums the relics of former ages, the first place in that long row of books which contains the records of the Aryan branch of mankind will belong forever to the Rig-Veda."[1]

The Rig-Veda a vast book of Psalms.

Confining our observations, therefore, to the Rig-Veda, we note that it is in substance a vast book of psalms. Its one thousand and twenty-eight lyrics (*suktas*), of various length, are divided into ten books (*mandalas*, circles), and together constitute a work about eight times larger than the one hundred and fifty Psalms of the Old Testament. The first book is composed of one hundred and ninety-one hymns, which are ascribed to some fifteen different authors (*rishis*). The second book contains forty-three hymns, all of which are attributed to Gritsamada and his family. The next five books are also ascribed each to a single author or his family, and vary in the number of their hymns from sixty-two to one hundred and four. The eighth book has ninety-two hymns, attributed to a great number of different authors, a majority of whom are of the race of Kanva. The ninth book is also ascribed to various authors, and has one hundred and fourteen hymns, all of which are addressed to Soma as a god. "The name Soma," says Grassmann, "is derived from a root, *su*, which originally meant 'to beget,' 'to produce,' but in the Rig-Veda is applied altogether to the extracting and pressing of the plant used for the preparation of soma, and the soma itself therefore meant originally the juice obtained by this procedure."[2] The tenth book, like the first, contains one hundred and ninety-one hymns; but they wear a different style, breathe a different spirit, and appear to belong to a much later period. "We find," says Grassmann, "in this, as in the first book, songs belonging to the springtime of vedic poesy, but also songs belonging to a time not very remote, as the time of the most recent period of vedic lyrics, such as presents itself to us in the Atharva-Veda."[3]

Variety of authors.

[1] History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature. Second Edition, p. 63. Lond., 1860.

[2] Grassmann's Rig-Veda. Metrical Version in German, with Critical and Explanatory Annotations (2 vols. Lpz., 1876, 1877). Preface to Ninth Book, vol. ii, p. 183.

[3] Rig-Veda. Preface to Tenth Book, vol. ii, p. 288.

Specimens of Vedic Hymns.

Our limits will allow us to present only a few specimens, but these will suffice to show the general character and style of the best Rig-Veda hymns. The following is Max Müller's translation of the fifty-third hymn of the first book, and is addressed to Indra:

1. Keep silence well! we offer praises to the great Indra in the house of the sacrificer. Does he find treasure for those who are like sleepers? Mean praise is not valued among the munificent.

2. Thou art the giver of horses, Indra, thou art the giver of cows, the giver of corn, the strong lord of wealth; the old guide of man, disappointing no desires, a friend to friends:—to him we address this song.

3. O powerful Indra, achiever of many works, most brilliant god—all this wealth around here is known to be thine alone: take from it, conqueror, bring it hither! do not stint the desire of the worshipper who longs for thee!

4. On these days thou art gracious, and on these nights, keeping off the enemy from our cows and from our stud. Tearing the fiend night after night with the help of Indra, let us rejoice in food, freed from haters.

5. Let us rejoice, Indra, in treasure and food, in wealth of manifold delight and splendor. Let us rejoice in the blessing of the gods, which gives us the strength of offspring, gives us cows first and horses.

6. These draughts inspired thee, O lord of the brave! these were vigour, these libations, in battles, when for the sake of the poet, the sacrificer, thou struckest down irresistibly ten thousands of enemies.

7. From battle to battle thou advancest bravely, from town to town thou destroyest all this with might, when thou, Indra, with Nami as thy friend, struckest down from afar the deceiver Namuki.

8. Thou hast slain Karnaga and Parnaya with the brightest spear of Atithigva. Without a helper thou didst demolish the hundred cities of Vangrida, which were besieged by Rigisvan.

9. Thou hast felled down with the chariot-wheel these twenty kings of men, who had attacked the friendless Susravas, and gloriously the sixty thousand and ninety-nine forts.

10. Thou, Indra, hast succoured Susravas with thy succours, Turvayana with thy protections. Thou hast made Kutsa, Atithigva, and Ayu subject to this mighty youthful king.

11. We who in future, protected by the gods, wish to be thy most blessed friends, we shall praise thee, blessed by thee with offspring, and enjoying henceforth a longer life.[1]

The following is a translation, by W. D. Whitney, of the eighteenth hymn of the tenth book. It furnishes a vivid portraiture of the proceedings of an ancient Hindu burial, and holds even at the present day an important place among the funeral ceremonies of the Hindus. The officiating priest thus speaks:

[1] Chips from a German Workshop, vol. i, pp. 30–33.

1. Go forth, O Death, upon a distant pathway,
one that's thine own, not that the gods do travel;
I speak to thee who eyes and ears possessest;
harm not our children, harm thou not our heroes.

2. Ye who death's foot have clogged[1] ere ye came hither,
your life and vigour longer yet retaining,
Sating yourselves with progeny and riches,
clean be ye now, and purified, ye offerers!

3. These have come here, not of the dead, but living;
our worship of the gods hath been propitious;
We've onward gone to dancing and to laughter,
our life and vigour longer yet retaining.[2]

4. This fix I as protection for the living;[3]
may none of them depart on that same errand;
Long may they live, a hundred numerous autumns,
'twixt death and them a mountain interposing.

5. As day succeeds to day in endless series,
as seasons happily move on with seasons,
As each that passes lacks not its successor,
so do thou make their lives move on, Creator!

6. Ascend to life, old age your portion making,
each after each, advancing in due order;[4]
May Twashter, skilful fashioner, propitious,
cause that you here enjoy a long existence.

7. These women here, not widows, blessed with husbands,
may deck themselves with ointment and with perfume;
Unstained by tears, adorned, untouched with sorrow,
the wives may first ascend unto the altar.

8. Go up unto the world of life, O woman!
thou liest by one whose soul is fled; come hither!
To him who grasps thy hand,[5] a second husband,
thou art as wife to spouse become related.

[1] Allusion to the custom of attaching a clog to the foot of the corpse, as if thereby to secure the attendants at the burial from harm.

[2] The friends of the deceased seem to have no idea of soon sharing his fate; they desire to banish the thought of death.

[3] The officiating priest drew a circle and set a stone between it and the grave, to symbolize the barrier which he would fain establish between the living and the dead.

[4] Addressed to the attendants, who hereupon left their places about the bier, and went up into the circle marked off for the living. First the men went up, then the wives, and finally the widow.

[5] The person who led the widow away was usually a brother-in-law, or a foster child.

9. The bow from out the dead man's hand now taking,[1]
that ours may be the glory, honour, prowess—
Mayest thou there, we here, rich in retainers,
vanquish our foes and them that plot against us.

10. Approach thou now the lap of earth, thy mother,
the wide-extending earth, the ever-kindly;
A maiden soft as wool to him who comes with gifts,
she shall protect thee from destruction's bosom.

11. Open thyself, O earth, and press not heavily;
be easy of access and of approach to him;
As mother with her robe her child,
so do thou cover him, O earth!

12. May earth maintain herself thus opened wide for him;
a thousand props shall give support about him;
And may those mansions ever drip with fatness;
may they be there for evermore his refuge.

13. Forth from about thee thus I build away the ground;
as I lay down this clod may I receive no harm;
This pillar may the Fathers here maintain for thee;
may Yama there provide for thee a dwelling.

We add a single specimen more, a metrical version of the one hundred and twenty-ninth hymn of the tenth book, which is especially interesting as being full of profound speculation. "In judging it," says Max Müller, "we should bear in mind that it was not written by a gnostic or by a pantheistic philosopher, but by a poet who felt all these doubts and problems as his own, without any wish to convince or to startle, only uttering what had been weighing on his mind, just as later poets would sing the doubts and sorrows of their heart."

Nor Aught nor Naught existed; yon bright sky
Was not, nor heaven's broad woof outstretched above.
What covered all? what sheltered? what concealed?
Was it the water's fathomless abyss?
There was not death—yet was there naught immortal,
There was no confine betwixt day and night;

[1] Up to the moment of interment a bow was carried in the hand of the deceased. This was at last taken away to signify that his life-work was now done, and to others remained the glory of conquests. The body was then tenderly committed to the earth. Compare Whitney's annotations on this hymn, and his essay on the Vedic Doctrine of a Future Life in the Bibliotheca Sacra for April, 1859, and also in his Oriental and Linguistic Studies, pp. 46–63. New York, 1873.

The only One breathed breathless by itself,
Other than It there nothing since has been.
Darkness there was, and all at first was veiled
In gloom profound—an ocean without light—
The germ that still lay covered in the husk
Burst forth, one nature, from the fervent heat.
Then first came love upon it, the new spring
Of mind—yea, poets in their hearts discerned,
Pondering, this bond between created things
And uncreated. Comes this spark from earth
Piercing and all-pervading, or from heaven?
Then seeds were sown, and mighty powers arose—
Nature below, and power and will above—
Who knows the secret? who proclaimed it here,
Whence, whence this manifold creation sprang?
The gods themselves came later into being—
Who knows from whence this great creation sprang?
He from whom all this great creation came,
Whether his will created or was mute,
The Most High Seer that is in highest heaven,
He knows it—or perchance even He knows not.[1]

Every discerning reader must note the polytheistic teachings of the Veda. Mr. Hardwick calls attention to this in the following remarks: "If we lay aside expressions in the vedic hymns which have occasionally transferred the attributes of power and omnipresence to some one elemental deity, as Indra, for example, and by so doing intimated that, even in the depths of nature-worship, intuitions pointing to one great and all-embracing Spirit could not be extinguished, there are scarcely a dozen 'mantras' in the whole collection where the unity of God is stated with an adequate amount of firmness and consistency. The great mass of those productions either invoke the aid, or deprecate the wrath of multitudinous deities, who elsewhere are regarded as no more than finite emanations from the 'lord of the creatures;' and therefore in the sacred books themselves polytheism was the feature ever prominent, and, what is more remarkable, was never openly repudiated."[2]

The Vedas are mainly polytheistic.

[1] Chips from a German Workshop, vol. i, pp. 76, 77.

[2] Christ and other Masters, p. 184. Compare Introduction to the several volumes of Wilson's Translation of the Rig-Veda, and Colebrook's Essay on the Vedas, first published in the Asiatic Researches, and later in his collected works. Lond., 1873. On the translation and interpretation of the Veda, see Muir, in Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (Lond., 1866), and Whitney, in the North American Review (1868); also in his Oriental and Linguistic Studies, pp. 100–132.

## The Buddhist Canon.

Life and influence of Sakya-muni, or Buddha.

Buddhism in India was a revolt from Brahmanism. Its founder was Sakya-muni, sometimes called Gautama, being of the family of the Sakyas, and the clan of the Gautamas, and belonging by birth to the warrior class (Kshatriya). Stripping the story of his life of the numerous fables and superstitious legends of later times, it would appear that this distinguished child of the Sakyas grew up a beautiful and accomplished youth, but took no interest in the common amusements of the young, and gave himself much to solitude and meditation. The problems of life and death and human suffering absorbed his inmost being. He at length forsook parents and wife and home, and, after years of study, penances, and austere self-denial, attained the conviction that he must go forth among men as an Enlightener and Reformer. Max Müller says: "After long meditations and ecstatic visions, he at last imagined that he had arrived at that true knowledge which discloses the cause and thereby destroys the fear of all the changes inherent in life. It was from the moment when he arrived at this knowledge that he claimed the name of Buddha, the Enlightened. At that moment we may truly say that the fate of millions of millions of human beings trembled in the balance. Buddha hesitated for a time whether he should keep his knowledge to himself, or communicate it to the world. Compassion for the sufferings of man prevailed, and the young prince became the founder of a religion which, after more than 2000 years, is still professed by 455,000,000 of human beings."[1]

Buddha a Reformer.

Sakya-muni's life, according to the best authorities, extended over the latter part of the sixth and the first half of the fifth century before Christ. He broke with Brahmanism from the first, and pronounced himself against the Vedas, the system of caste, and sacrifices. How far Kapila's system of the Sankhya philosophy may have been a preparation for Buddhism is a question,[2] but that Buddha became a mighty reformer, and that his system almost succeeded for a time in overthrowing Brahmanism in India, are matters of history. "The human mind in Asia," observes J. F. Clarke, "went through the same course of experience afterward repeated in Europe. It protested, in the interest of humanity, against the oppression of a priestly caste. Brahmanism, like the Church of Rome, established a system of sacramental salvation in

[1] Essay on Buddhism, in Chips from a German Workshop, vol. i, p. 211.

[2] Comp. Hardwick, Christ and other Masters, pp. 147–169; and Müller's Chips from a German Workshop, vol. i, pp. 222–226.

the hands of a sacred order. Buddhism, like Protestantism, revolted, and established a doctrine of individual salvation based on personal character. Brahmanism, like the Church of Rome, teaches an exclusive spiritualism, glorifying penances and martyrdom, and considers the body the enemy of the soul. But Buddhism and Protestantism accept nature and its laws, and make a religion of humanity as well as of devotion. To such broad statements numerous exceptions may doubtless be always found, but these are the large lines of distinction."[1]

Compilation of the Tripitaka.

The sacred scriptures of Buddhism are commonly called the Tripitaka, which means the "three baskets," or three collections of religious documents. Buddha, like Jesus, left no written statement of his teachings; but very soon after his death, according to tradition, a great council was called (about B. C. 477), at which the sayings of the great master were written down with care. A hundred years later another council assembled, to consider and correct certain deviations from the original faith. But it was probably not until a third council, convened by King Asoka about B. C. 242, that the Buddhist canon in its present form was completed.[2] At that great council King Asoka, "the Indian Constantine," admonished the members of the assembly "that what had been said by Buddha, that alone was well said;" and at the same time he provided for the propagation of Buddhism by missionary enterprise. And it is worthy of note that, as Christianity originated among the Jews, but has had its chief triumphs among the Gentiles, so Buddhism originated among the Hindus, but has won most of its adherents among other tribes and nations.

Contents and magnitude of the Tripitaka.

The Tripitaka, as we now possess it, consists of the Vinaya-Pitaka, devoted to ethics and discipline; the Sutra-Pitaka, containing the Sutras, or discourses of Buddha; and the Abhidharma-Pitaka, which treats of dogmatical philosophy and metaphysics.[3] The entire collection constitutes an immense body of literature, rivaling in magnitude all that was ever included under the title of Veda. It is said to contain 29,368,000 letters, or more than seven times the number contained in our English Bible. The Tibetan edition of the Tripitaka fills about three hundred and twenty-five folio volumes. The mere titles of the divisions, sub-divisions, and chapters of this Buddhist canon would cover several pages. The greater portion of this immense litera-

[1] Ten Great Religions, pp. 142, 143. Boston, 1871.

[2] See Oldenberg's Introduction to the Vinaya-Pitaka, and Müller's Introduction to the Dhammapada, in vol. x, of Sacred Books of the East.

[3] Comp. Chapter xviii, of Spence Hardy, Eastern Monachism. Lond., 1850.

ture, in its most ancient texts, exists as yet only in manuscript. But as Buddhism spread and triumphed mightily in southern and eastern Asia, its sacred books have been translated into Pali, Burmese, Siamese, Tibetan, Chinese, and other Asiatic tongues. In fact, every important nation or tribe, which has adopted Buddhism, appears to have a more or less complete Buddhist literature of its own, and the names of the different books and treatises vary according to the languages in which they are extant.[1] Amid the multiplicity of texts and versions it is impossible now to point with confidence to any authoritative original; but the form of the canon as it exists among the Southern Buddhists, and especially in the Pali texts, is esteemed most highly by scholars.

Principal doctrines of Buddhism.

The fundamental doctrines of Buddhism are few and simple, and, in substance, may be briefly stated as consisting of the Four Verities, the Eightfold Path, and the Five Commandments. The Four sublime Verities are, (1) All existence, being subject to change and decay, is evil. (2) The source of all this evil and consequent sorrow is desire. (3) Desire and the evil which follows it may be made to cease. (4) There is a fixed and certain way by which to attain exemption from all evil. The Eightfold Path consists of (1) Right Belief, (2) Right Judgment, (3) Right Utterance, (4) Right Motives, (5) Right Occupation, (6) Right Obedience, (7) Right Memory, and (8) Right Meditation. The Five Commandments are, (1) Do not kill; (2) Do not steal; (3) Do not lie; (4) Do not become intoxicated; (5) Do not commit adultery. There are also five other well-known precepts, which have not, however, the grade of the commandments, namely, (1) Do not take solid food after noon; (2) Do not visit scenes of amusement; (3) Do not use ornaments or perfumery in dress; (4) Do not use luxurious beds; (5) Do not accept gold or silver.[2]

Specimens of Buddha's discourses.

The following passage from the first chapter of the Maha-Parinibbana-Sutta, one of the subdivisions of the Sutra-Pitaka, is a specimen of the discourses of Buddha:

And the Blessed One arose, and went to the Service Hall; and when he was seated, he addressed the brethren, and said:

"I will teach you, O mendicants, seven conditions of the welfare of a community. Listen well and attend, and I will speak."

[1] Thus the Sanskrit name Tripitaka becomes Tipitaka and Pitakattaya in Pali, and Tunpitaka in Singhalese. Buddhism itself becomes Foism in China, and Lamaism in Thibet.

[2] For an extensive presentation of the doctrines and usages of Buddhism, see Spence Hardy, Eastern Monachism; also his Manual of Buddhism, New Edition, Lond., 1880. Edwin Arnold has beautifully expressed in poetical form the leading doctrines of Buddha, in the eighth book of his Light of Asia.

"Even so, Lord," said the Brethren, in assent, to the Blessed One; and he spake as follows:

"So long, O mendicants, as the brethren meet together in full and frequent assemblies—so long as they meet together in concord, and rise in concord, and carry out in concord the duties of the order—so long as the brethren shall establish nothing that has not been already prescribed, and abrogate nothing that has been already established, and act in accordance with the rules of the order as now laid down—so long as the brethren honour and esteem and revere and support the elders of experience and long standing, the fathers and leaders of the order, and hold it a point of duty to hearken to their words—so long as the brethren fall not under the influence of that craving which, springing up within them, would give rise to renewed existence—so long as the brethren delight in a life of solitude—so long as the brethren so train their minds that good and holy men shall come to them, and those who have come shall dwell at ease—so long may the brethren be expected not to decline, but to prosper.

"So long as these seven conditions shall continue to exist among the brethren, so long as they are well instructed in these conditions, so long may the brethren be expected not to decline, but to prosper."

"Other seven conditions of welfare will I teach you, O brethren. Listen well, and attend, and I will speak."

And on their expressing their assent, he spake as follows:

"So long as the brethren shall not engage in, or be fond of, or be connected with business—so long as the brethren shall not be in the habit of, or be fond of, or be partakers in idle talk—so long as the brethren shall not be addicted to, or be fond of, or indulge in slothfulness—so long as the brethren shall not frequent, or be fond of, or indulge in society—so long as the brethren shall neither have, nor fall under the influence of, sinful desires—so long as the brethren shall not become the friends, companions, or intimates of sinners—so long as the brethren shall not come to a stop on their way [to Nirvana] because they have attained to any lesser thing—so long may the brethren be expected not to decline, but to prosper.

"So long as these conditions shall continue to exist among the brethren, so long as they are instructed in these conditions, so long may the brethren be expected not to decline, but to prosper."

"Other seven conditions of welfare will I teach you, O brethren. Listen well, and attend, and I will speak."

And on their expressing their assent, he spake as follows:

"So long as the brethren shall be full of faith, modest in heart, afraid of sin, full of learning, strong in energy, active in mind, and full of wisdom, so long may the brethren be expected not to decline, but to prosper.

"So long as these conditions shall continue to exist among the brethren, so long as they are instructed in these conditions, so long may the brethren be expected not to decline, but to prosper."

"Other seven conditions of welfare will I teach you, O brethren. Listen well, and attend, and I will speak."

And on their expressing their assent, he spake as follows:

"So long as the brethren shall exercise themselves in the sevenfold higher

wisdom, that is to say, in mental activity, search after truth, energy, joy, peace, earnest contemplation, and equanimity of mind, so long may the brethren be expected not to decline, but to prosper.

"So long as these conditions shall continue to exist among the brethren, so long as they are instructed in these conditions, so long may the brethren be expected not to decline, but to prosper."

"Other seven conditions of welfare will I teach you, O brethren. Listen well, and attend, and I will speak."

And on their expressing their assent, he spake as follows:

"So long as the brethren shall exercise themselves in the sevenfold perception due to earnest thought, that is to say, the perception of impermanency, of non-individuality, of corruption, of the danger of sin, of sanctification, of purity of heart, of Nirvana, so long may the brethren be expected not to decline, but to prosper.

"So long as these conditions shall continue to exist among the brethren, so long as they are instructed in these conditions, so long may the brethren be expected not to decline, but to prosper."

"Six conditions of welfare will I teach you, O brethren. Listen well, and attend, and I will speak."

And on their expressing their assent, he spake as follows:

"So long as the brethren shall persevere in kindness of action, speech, and thought among the saints, both in public and in private—so long as they shall divide without partiality, and share in common with the upright and the holy, all such things as they receive in accordance with the just provisions of the order, down even to the mere contents of a begging bowl—so long as the brethren shall live among the saints in the practice, both in public and in private, of those virtues which (unbroken, intact, unspotted, unblemished) are productive of freedom, and praised by the wise; which are untarnished by the desire of future life, or by the belief in the efficacy of outward acts; and which are conducive to high and holy thoughts—so long as the brethren shall live among the saints, cherishing, both in public and in private, that noble and saving faith which leads to the complete destruction of the sorrow of him who acts according to it—so long may the brethren be expected not to decline, but to prosper.

"So long as these six conditions shall continue to exist among the brethren, so long as they are instructed in these six conditions, so long may the brethren be expected not to decline, but to prosper."

And while the Blessed One stayed there at Ragagaha on the Vulture's Peak he held that comprehensive religious talk with the brethren on the nature of upright conduct, and of earnest contemplation, and of intelligence. "Great is the fruit, great the advantage of earnest contemplation when set round with upright conduct. Great is the fruit, great the advantage of intellect when set round with earnest contemplation. The mind set round with intelligence is freed from the great evils, that is to say, from sensuality, from individuality, from delusion, and from ignorance."[1]

[1] Buddhist Suttas, translated from Pali, by T. W. Rhys Davids, pp. 6–11, vol. xi, of Sacred Books of the East. Oxford, 1881.

The following is the twentieth chapter of the Dhammapada, another subdivision of the Sutra-Pitaka:

The best of ways is the eightfold: the best of truths the four words; the best of virtues passionlessness; the best of men he who has eyes to see.

This is the way, there is no other that leads to the purifying of intelligence. Go on this way! Everything else is the deceit of Mara (the tempter).

If you go on this way, you will make an end of pain! The way was preached by me, when I had understood the removal of the thorns (in the flesh).

You yourself must make an effort. The Tathagatas (Buddhas) are only preachers. The thoughtful who enter the way are freed from the bondage of Mara.

"All created things perish," he who knows and sees this becomes passive in pain; this is the way to purity.

"All created things are grief and pain," he who knows and sees this becomes passive in pain; this is the way that leads to purity.

"All forms are unreal," he who knows and sees this becomes passive in pain; this is the way that leads to purity.

He who does not rouse himself when it is time to rise, who, though young and strong, is full of sloth, whose will and thought are weak, that lazy and idle man will never find the way to knowledge.

Watching his speech, well restrained in mind, let a man never commit any wrong with his body! Let a man keep these three roads of action clear, and he will achieve the way which is taught by the wise.

Through zeal knowledge is gotten, through lack of zeal knowledge is lost; let a man who knows this double path of gain and loss thus place himself that knowledge may grow.

Cut down the whole forest (of lust), not a tree only! Danger comes out of the forest (of lust). When you have cut down both the forest (of lust) and its undergrowth, then, Bhikshus, you will be rid of the forest and free!

So long as the love of man toward women, even the smallest, is not destroyed, so long is his mind in bondage, as the calf that drinks milk is to its mother.

Cut out the love of self, like an autumn lotus, with thy hand! Cherish the road of peace. Nirvana has been shown by Sugata (Buddha).

"Here I shall dwell in the rain, here in winter and summer," thus the fool meditates, and does not think of his death.

Death comes and carries off that man, praised for his children and flocks, his mind distracted, as a flood carries off a sleeping village.

Sons are no help, nor a father, nor relations; there is no help from kinsfolk for one whom death has seized.

A wise and good man who knows the meaning of this, should quickly clear the way that leads to Nirvana.[1]

[1] The Dhammapada, translated by F. Max Müller, pp. 67–69, vol. x, of Sacred Books of the East. Oxford, 1881. Published also along with Rogers' translation of Buddhaghosha's Parables (Lond., 1870), and Müller's Lectures on the Science of Religion. New York, 1872.

## Chinese Sacred Books.

Three diverse religious systems prevail in China—Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism, each of which has a vast multitude of adherents. The sacred books of the first named consist of translations of the Buddhist canon from various languages of India, principally, however, from the Sanskrit, and need no separate notice here.[1] The great book of Taoism is the Tao-teh-King, a production of the celebrated philosopher Laotsze, who was born about six hundred years before the Christian era. The sacred books of Confucianism are commonly known as the five King and the four Shu.

Three religions of China.

The Tao-teh-King is scarcely entitled to the name of a sacred book. It is rather a philosophical treatise, by an acute speculative mind, and resembles some of the subtle portions of Plato's dialogues. It is about the length of the book of Ecclesiastes, to which it also bears some resemblance. But it is denied, on high authority, that there is any real connexion between Taoism as a religion now prevalent in China and this book of Laotsze.[2] The Tao-teh-King has been divided into eighty-one short chapters, and is devoted to the inculcation and praise of what the author calls his *Tao*. What all this word is designed to represent is very difficult, if not impossible, to determine. In the Introduction to his translation of the work, Chalmers says: "I have thought it better to leave the word *Tao* untranslated, both because it has given the name to the sect (the Taoists), and because no English word is its exact equivalent. Three terms suggest themselves—the Way, Reason, and the Word; but they are all liable to objection. Were we guided by etymology, 'the Way,' would come nearest to the original, and in one or two passages the idea of a *way* seems to be in the term; but this is too materialistic to serve the purpose of a translation. 'Reason,' again, seems to be more like a quality or attribute of some conscious being than *Tao* is. I would translate it by 'the Word,' in the sense of the Logos, but this would be like settling the question which I wish to leave open, viz., what amount of resemblance there is between the Logos of the New Testament and this *Tao*, which is its nearest representative in Chinese. In our version of the New Testament

The Tao-teh-King.

The meaning of Tao.

[1] The extent of this literature may be seen in Beal's Catena of Buddhist Scriptures from the Chinese. Lond., 1871.

[2] See Legge, Lectures on the Religions of China. Lecture 3d, on Taoism as a Religion and a Philosophy. New York, 1881.

in Chinese we have in the first chapter of John, 'In the beginning was *Tao*,' etc."[1]

Others have sought by other terms to express the idea of Tao. It has been called the Supreme Reason, the Universal Soul, the Eternal Idea, the Nameless Void, Mother of being, and Essence of things. The following is from Laotsze himself, and one of the best specimens of his book, being the whole of chapter twenty-fifth, as translated by Chalmers:

Laotsze's account of Tao.

There was something chaotic in nature which existed before heaven and earth. It was still. It was void. It stood alone and was not changed. It pervaded everywhere and was not endangered. It may be regarded as the mother of the universe. I know not its name, but give it the title of *Tao*. If I am forced to make a name for it, I say it is Great; being great, I say that it passes away; passing away, I say that it is far off; being far off, I say that it returns. Now Tao is great; heaven is great; earth is great; a king is great. In the universe there are four greatnesses, and a king is one of them. Man takes his law from the earth; the earth takes its law from heaven; heaven takes its law from Tao; and Tao takes its law from what it is in itself.

The moral teachings of the book may be seen in chapters sixty-third and sixty-seventh, which are thus translated by Legge:

(It is the way of Tao) not to act from any personal motive; to conduct affairs without feeling the trouble of them; to taste without being aware of the flavour; to account the great as small and the small as great; to recompense injury with kindness.

(The follower of Tao) anticipates things that would become difficult while they are easy, and does things that would become great while they are little. The difficult things in the world arise from what are easy, and the great things from what are small. Thus it is that the sage never does what is great, and therefore can accomplish the greatest things.

He who assents lightly will be found to keep but little faith. He who takes many things easily is sure to meet with many difficulties. Hence the sage sees difficulty in (what seem) easy things, and therefore never has any difficulties.

All in the world say that my Tao is great, but that I seem to be inferior to others. Now it is just this greatness which makes me seem inferior to others. Those who are deemed equal to others have long been—small men.

But there are three precious things which I prize and hold fast. The first is gentle compassion; the second is economy; the third is (humility), not presuming to take precedence in the world. With gentle compassion I can be brave. With economy I can be liberal. Not presuming to claim

[1] The Speculations on Metaphysics, Polity, and Morality, of "the Old Philosopher," Laotsze; translated from the Chinese, with an Introduction by John Chalmers, A.M., pp. xi, xii. Lond., 1868.

precedence in the world, I can make myself a vessel fit for the most distinguished services. Now-a-days they give up gentle compassion, and cultivate (mere physical) courage; they give up economy, and (try to be) lavish (without it); they give up being last, and seek to be first:—of all which the end is death. Gentle compassion is sure to overcome in fight, and to be firm in maintaining its own. Heaven will save its possessor, protecting him by his gentleness.[1]

Leaves the personal existence of God doubtful.

It has been disputed whether the Tao-teh-King acknowledges the existence of a personal God. Professor Douglas declares that Laotsze knew nothing of such a being, and that the whole tenor of his philosophy antagonizes such a belief. Legge, on the other hand, affirms that the Tao-teh-King does recognize the existence of God, but contains no direct religious teaching. Laotsze's Taoism, he observes, is the exhibition of a way or method of living which men should cultivate as the highest and purest development of their nature. It has served as a discipline of mind and life for multitudes, leading some to withdraw entirely from the busy world, and others to struggle earnestly to keep themselves from the follies and passions of reckless and ambitious men. The highest moral teaching of Laotsze is found in the chapter sixty-third, quoted above, in which he says that Tao prompts "to recompense injury with kindness." In this particular he surpassed Confucius, whose great glory it was to enunciate, in negative form, the golden rule, "What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others." Confucius confessed that he did not always keep his own rule, much less could he adopt the loftier precept of Laotsze, but said rather, "Recompense injury with justice, and return good for good."[2]

Confucius and the ancient Chinese scriptures.

Far more extensive and important, however, taken as a whole, are the sacred books of Confucianism, which is *par excellence* the religion of the Chinese Empire. But Confucius was not the founder of the religion which has become attached to his name. He claimed merely to have studied deeply into antiquity, and to be a transmitter and teacher of the records and worship of the past. "It is an error," says Legge, "to suppose that he compiled the historical documents, poems, and other ancient books from various works existing in his time. Portions of the oldest works had already perished. His study of those that remained, and his exhortations to his disciples also to study them, contributed to their preservation. What he wrote or said about their meaning should be received by us with reverence; but

[1] Lectures on the Religions of China, pp. 222–224.

[2] Comp. Legge, Ibid., pp. 143 and passim.

if all the works which he handled had come down to us entire, we should have been, so far as it is possible for foreigners to be, in the same position as he was for learning the ancient religion of his country. Our text-books would be the same as his. Unfortunately most of the ancient books suffered loss and injury after Confucius had passed from the stage of life. We have reason, however, to be thankful that we possess so many and so much of them. No other literature, comparable to them for antiquity, has come down to us in such a state of preservation."[1]

The five King are known respectively as the Shu, the Shih, the Yi, the Li Ki, and the Khun Khiu.[2] The name *King*, which means a web of cloth, or the warp which keeps the threads in place, came into use in the time of the Han dynasty, about B. C. 200, and was applied by the scholars of this period to the most valuable ancient books, which were regarded as having a sort of canonical authority. Names of the five King.

The Shu King is a book of historical documents, somewhat resembling the various historical portions of the Old Testament, and is believed to be the oldest of all the Chinese books. Its contents relate to a period extending over seventeen centuries, from about B. C. 2357 to B. C. 627. It commences with an account of Yao, the most venerable of the ancient kings, of whom it is written: "He was reverential, intelligent, accomplished, and thoughtful,—naturally and without effort. He was sincerely courteous, and capable of all complaisance. The bright influence of these qualities was felt through the four quarters of the land, and reached to heaven above and earth beneath. He made the able and virtuous distinguished, and thence proceeded to the love of all in the nine classes of his kindred, who thus became harmonious. He also regulated and polished the people of his domain, who all became brightly intelligent. Finally, he united and harmonized the myriad states; and so the black-haired people were transformed. The result was universal concord." The Shu King.

The Shu King is about equal in extent to the two books of Chronicles, and is divided into five parts, which are designated respectively, the books of Thang, Yu, Hsia, Shang, and Kau. These are the names of so many different ancient dynasties which ruled in China, and the several books consist of the annals, speeches, counsels, and proclamations of the great kings and ministers of the ancients.

[1] Preface to his translation of the Shu King in vol. iii of the Sacred Books of the East, as edited by Max Müller.

[2] We here adopt the orthography followed by Legge in his translations for the Sacred Books of the East.

The following passage is one of the most favourable specimens, and illustrates the tone and character of Chinese morality, and their most popular conceptions of virtue. It is from the third book of Part II, which is entitled "The Counsels of Kao-yao." Kao-yao was the minister of crime under the reign of the great Emperor Shun (about 2300 B. C.), and is celebrated as a model administrator of justice:

Kao-yao said, "O! there are in all nine virtues to be discovered in conduct, and when we say that a man possesses (any) virtue, that is as much as to say he does such and such things." Yu asked, "What (are the nine virtues)?" Kao-yao replied, "Affability combined with dignity; mildness combined with firmness; bluntness combined with respectfulness; aptness for government combined with reverent caution; docility combined with boldness; straightforwardness combined with gentleness; an easy negligence combined with discrimination; boldness combined with sincerity; and valour combined with righteousness. (When these qualities are) displayed, and that continuously, have we not the good (officer)? When there is a daily display of three (of these) virtues, their possessor could early and late regulate and brighten the clan (of which he was made chief). When there is a daily severe and reverent cultivation of six of them, their possessor could brilliantly conduct the affairs of the state (with which he was invested). When (such men) are all received and advanced, the possessors of those nine virtues will be employed in (the public) service. The men of a thousand and men of a hundred will be in their offices; the various ministers will emulate one another; all the officers will accomplish their duties at the proper times, observant of the five seasons (as the several elements predominate in them),—and thus their various duties will be fully accomplished. Let not (the Son of Heaven) set to the holders of states the example of indolence or dissoluteness. Let him be wary and fearful (remembering that) in one day or two days there may occur ten thousand springs of things. Let him not have his various officers cumberers of their places. The work is Heaven's; men must act for it!"

A passage in Part V, Book 4, thus enumerates the five sources of happiness, and the six extreme evils:

The first is long life; the second, riches; the third, soundness of body and serenity of mind; the fourth, the love of virtue; and the fifth, fulfilling to the end the will of Heaven. Of the six extreme evils, the first is misfortune shortening life; the second, sickness; the third, distress of mind; the fourth, poverty; the fifth, wickedness; the sixth, weakness.

The Shih King.

The Shih King is a book of poetry, and contains three hundred and five pieces, commonly called odes. It is the psalter of the Chinese bible, and consists of ballads relating to customs and events of Chinese antiquity, and songs and hymns to

be sung on great state occasions and in connexion with sacrificial services.[1] The following is a fair example of the odes used in connexion with the worship of ancestors. A young king, feeling his responsibilities, would fain follow the example of his father, and prays to him for help:

I take counsel, at the beginning of my rule,
How I can follow the example of my shrined father.
Ah! far-reaching were his plans,
And I am not yet able to carry them out.
However, I endeavour to reach to them,
My continuation of them will still be all-deflected.
I am a little child,
Unequal to the many difficulties of the state.
Having taken his place, I will look for him to go up
and come down in the court,
To ascend and descend in the house.
Admirable art thou, O great Father;
Condescend to preserve and enlighten me.[2]

The Yi King is commonly called "the Book of Changes," from its supposed illustrations of the onward course of nature and the changing customs of the world.[3] It contains eight trigrams, ascribed to Fuhsi, the mythical founder of the Chinese nation, and hence some have believed it to be the oldest of all the Chinese scriptures. But according to Legge, "not a single character in the Yi is older than the twelfth century B. C. The text of it, not taking in the appendices of Confucius, consists of two portions—from king Wan, and from his son, the duke of Chau. The composition of Wan's portion is referred to the year B. C. 1143. As an authority for the ancient religion of China, therefore, the Yi is by no means equal to the Shu and the Shih. It is based on diagrams, or lineal figures, ascribed to Fuhsi, and made up of whole and divided lines (—— and — —). What their framer intended by these figures we do not know. No doubt there was a tradition about it, and I am willing to believe that it found a home in the existing Yi. . . . The character called Yi is the symbol for the idea of change. The fashion of the world is continually being altered. We have action and re-action, flux and reflux—now one condition, and immediately its opposite. The

The Yi King.

[1] See The Shih King; or the Book of Ancient Poetry, translated into English Verse, with Essays and Notes, by James Legge. Lond., 1876.

[2] Decade III, Ode 2, p. 329, Sacred Books of the East, vol. iii. Oxford, 1879.

[3] The Yi King is translated and annotated by Legge in vol. xvi of the Sacred Books of the East. Oxford, 1882.

vicissitudes in the worlds of sense and society have their correspondencies in the changes that take place in the lines of the diagrams. Again, certain relations and conditions of men and things lead to good, are fortunate; and certain others lead to evil, are unfortunate; and these results are indicated by the relative position of the lines. Those lines were systematically changed by manipulating with a fixed number of the stalks of a certain plant. In this way the Yi served the purpose of divination; and since such is the nature of the book, a reader must be prepared for much in it that is tantalizing, fantastic, and perplexing."[1]

The Li Ki and the Khun Khiu.

The two remaining classics are of less interest and importance. The Li Ki King is a record of rites, consisting of three collections, called "the Three Rituals," and is the most bulky of the Five King. It contains regulations for the administration of the government, describes the various officers and their duties, and the rules of etiquette by which scholars and officers should order their conduct on social and state occasions. The Khun Khiu King is of the nature of a supplement to the historical annals of the Shu King. It was compiled by Confucius from the annals of his native state of Lu, and extends from the year B. C. 722 to B. C. 481.

The Chinese classics known as "the Four Shu" have not the rank and authority of the Five King. They are the works of disciples of Confucius, and consist (1) of the Lun Yu, or Discourses of Confucius and conversations between him and his followers; (2) the works of Mencius, next to Confucius the greatest sage and teacher of Confucianism; (3) the Ta Hsio, or Great Learning, ascribed to Tszang-tsze, a disciple of Confucius; and (4) the Kung Yung, or Doctrine of the Mean, a production of Tszesze, the grandson of Confucius.[2] There is also the Hsiao King, or Classic of Filial Piety, which holds a high place in Chinese literature.[3]

In the preface to his translation of the Sacred Books of China, Legge observes, "that the ancient books of China do not profess to have been inspired, or to contain what we should call a Revelation. Historians, poets, and others wrote them as they were moved in their own minds. An old poem may occasionally contain what it says was spoken by God, but we can only understand that language as calling attention emphatically to the statement to which it is

[1] The Religions of China, pp. 37, 38.

[2] See The Chinese Classics, with a Translation, Critical and Exegetical Notes, Prolegomena, and copious Indexes. Hong Kong, 1861–1865.

[3] The Hsiao King is translated and annotated by Legge in vol. iii of Sacred Books of the East.

prefixed. We also read of Heaven's raising up the great ancient sovereigns and teachers, and variously assisting them to accomplish their undertakings; but all this need not be more than what a religious man of any country might affirm at the present day of direction, help, and guidance given to himself and others from above."

Whatever the true solution of the questions may be, the facts that distinguished Chinese scholars dispute as to whether the Confucian Sacred Books recognize the existence of a personal God, and that missionaries, in translating the Christian Scriptures into Chinese, scruple over a word that will properly represent the Christian idea of God, show the comparative vagueness and obscurity of the religion of the Chinese scriptures.

## The Egyptian Book of the Dead.

A most mysterious and interesting work is the Sacred Book of the ancient Egyptians, commonly known as the Book of the Dead. Some Egyptologists prefer the title "Funeral Ritual," inasmuch as it contains many prescriptions and prayers to be used in funeral services, and the vignettes which appear on many copies represent funeral processions, and priests reading the formularies out of a book. But as the prayers are, for the most part, the language to be used by the departed in their progress through the under world, the title "Book of the Dead" has been generally adopted. Its different names.

The Egyptian title of the work is, Book of the *Peri em hru*, three simple words, but by no means easy of explanation when taken together without a context.[1] *Peri* signifies "coming forth," *hru* is "day," and *em* is the preposition signifying "from," susceptible, like the same preposition in other languages, of a variety of uses. The probable meaning of *Peri em hru* is "coming forth by day," and is to be understood mainly of the immortality and resurrection of the dead. The book exists in a great number of manuscripts recovered from Egyptian tombs, and the text is very corrupt; for as the writing was not intended for mortal eyes, but to be buried with the dead, copyists would not be likely to be very scrupulous in their work. But the book exists not only on papyrus rolls that were deposited in the tombs, but many of the chapters are inscribed upon coffins, mummies, sepulchral wrappings, statues, and the walls of tombs. Some tombs may be said to contain entire recensions of

[1] The Religion of Ancient Egypt, by P. Le Page Renouf. Hibbert Lectures for 1879, p. 181. New York, 1880. Our account of the Book of the Dead is condensed mainly from Renouf's fifth Lecture.

the book. But no two copies contain exactly the same chapters, or follow the same arrangement. The papyrus of Turin, published by Lepsius, contains one hundred and sixty-five chapters, and is the longest known. But a considerable number of chapters found in other manuscripts are not included in it. None of the copies contain the entire collection of chapters, but the more ancient manuscripts have fewer chapters than the more recent. There is a great uniformity of style and of grammatical forms, as compared with other productions of Egyptian literature, and nothing can exceed the simplicity and brevity of the sentences. A critical collation of a sufficient number of copies of each chapter will, in time, restore the text to as accurate a standard as could be attained in the most flourishing days of the old Egyptian monarchy.

Corrupt and confused condition of the text.

The book is mythological throughout,[1] and assumes the reader's familiarity with its myths and legends. The difficulty of its exposition is not in literally translating the text, but in understanding the meaning concealed beneath familiar words. The English translation by Samuel Birch, published in the fifth volume of Bunsen's Egypt's Place in Universal History, is an exact rendering of the text of the Turin manuscript, and to an Englishman gives nearly as correct an impression of the original as the text itself would do to an Egyptian who had not been carefully taught the mysteries of his religion.

Its obscurity in the subject matter.

The foundation of Egyptian mythology is the legend of Osiris.[2] Having long ruled in Egypt, he was at last slain by the evil Typhon, enclosed in a mummy case, and cast into the river Nile. Isis, his sister and spouse, sought long for his body, and at length found it at Byblus, on the Phœnician coast, where it had been tossed by the waves. She brought it back to Egypt, and buried it; and when Horus, their son, grew up, he slew the evil Typhon, and so avenged his father. Osiris, however, was not dead. He had, in fact, descended to the under world, and established his dominion there, and at the same time revived in the person of his son Horus, and renewed his dominion over the living.

The Osiris legend the basis of Egyptian mythology.

[1] "The Ritual," says Birch, "is, according to Egyptian notions, essentially an inspired work; and the term Hermetic, so often applied by profane writers to these books, in reality means inspired. It is Thoth himself who speaks and reveals the will of the gods and the mysterious nature of divine things to man. . . . Portions of them are expressly stated to have been written by the very finger of Thoth himself, and to have been the composition of a great God." Introduction to his translation of the Funeral Ritual, in Bunsen's Egypt's Place in Universal History, vol. v, p. 133.

[2] On this Egyptian legend comp. Bunsen, Egypt's Place in Universal History, vol. i, pp. 423–439, and George Rawlinson, History of Ancient Egypt, vol. i, pp. 365–371.

The usual explanation of this legend makes it a mythical portraiture of the annual dying and reviving of the powers of nature under the peculiar conditions of the valley of the Nile. Osiris represents the fertilizing river; Isis the fruit-bearing land; Typhon the evil spirit of the parched deserts and the salt sea, the demon of drought and barrenness. Horus is the sun, appearing in the vernal equinox, and heralding the rising of the Nile. Accordingly, when the Nile sinks before the scorching winds of the Libyan desert, Osiris is slain by Typhon. Isis, the land, then sighs and yearns for her lost brother and spouse. But when the Nile again overflows, it is a resurrection of Osiris, and the vernal sun destroys the demon of drought and renews the face of nature. Other slightly varying explanations of the legend have been given, but whatever particular view we adopt, it will be easy to see how the drapery of these legends might, in course of time, come to be used of the death and resurrection of man. Hence we find that the names of mythical personages are constantly recurring in the Book of the Dead.

The probable meaning of the myth.

The beatification of the dead is the main subject of the book. The blessed dead are represented as enjoying an existence similar to that which they had led on earth. They have the use of all their limbs, eat and drink, and satisfy all their physical wants as in their earthly life. But they are not confined to any one locality, or to any one form or mode of existence. They have the range of the entire universe, in every shape and form which they desire. Twelve chapters of the Book of the Dead consist of formulas to be used in effecting certain transformations. The forms assumed, according to these chapters, are the turtledove, the serpent Sata, the bird Bennu, the crocodile Sebek, the god Ptah, a golden hawk, the chief of the principal gods, a soul, a lotusflower, and a heron. The transformations to which these chapters refer, however, are far from exhausting the list of possible ones. No limit is imposed on the will of the departed, and in this respect the Egyptian doctrine of transmigration differs widely from the Pythagorean.

Beatification of the dead the main subject.

Throughout the Book of the Dead, the identification of the deceased with Osiris, or assimilation to him, is taken for granted, and all the deities of the family of Osiris are supposed to perform for the deceased whatever the legend records as having been done for Osiris himself. Thus, in the eighteenth chapter, the deceased is brought before a series of divinities in succession, the gods of Heliopolis, Abydos, and other localities, and at each station the litany begins:

Identification with Osiris.

O Tehuti [or Thoth], who causest Osiris to triumph against his opponents, cause the Osiris (such a one) to triumph against his opponents, even as thou hast made Osiris to triumph against his opponents.

In the next chapter, which is another recension of the eighteenth, and is entitled the "Crown of Triumph," the deceased is declared triumphant forever, and all the gods in heaven and earth repeat this, and the chapter ends with the following:

Horus has repeated this declaration four times, and all his enemies fall prostrate before him annihilated. Horus, the son of Isis, repeats it millions of times, and all his enemies fall annihilated. They are carried off to the place of execution in the East; their heads are cut off, their necks are broken; their thighs are severed, and delivered up to the great destroyer who dwells in Aati; they shall not come forth from the custody of Seb forever.

Other assimilations.

But not to Osiris only is the deceased assimilated. In the forty-second chapter every limb is assimilated to a different deity; the hair to Nu, the face to Ra, the eyes to Hathor, the ears to Apuat, the nose to the god of Sechem, the lips to Anubis, the teeth to Selket, and so on, the catalogue ending with the words: "There is not a limb in him without a god, and Tehuti is a safeguard to all his members." Further on it is said:

Not men, nor gods, nor the ghosts of the departed, nor the damned, past, present, or future, whoever they be, can do him hurt. He it is who cometh forth in safety. "Whom men know not" is his name. The "Yesterday which sees endless years" is his name, passing in triumph by the roads of heaven. The deceased is the Lord of eternity; he is reckoned even as Chepera; he is the master of the kingly crown.

Dangers of the deceased.

The one hundred and forty-ninth chapter gives an account of the terrible nature of certain divinities and localities which the deceased must encounter—gigantic and venomous serpents, gods with names significant of death and destruction, waters and atmospheres of flames. But none of these prevail over the Osiris; he passes through all things without harm, and lives in peace with the fearful gods who preside over these abodes. Some of these gods remind one of the demons in Dante's Inferno. But though ministers of divine justice, their nature is not evil. The following are invocations, from the seventeenth chapter, to be used of one passing through these dangers:

O Ra, in thine egg, radiant in thy disk shining forth from the horizon, swimming over the steel firmament, sailing over the pillars of Shu; thou who hast no second among the gods, who producest the winds by the flames of thy mouth, and who enlightenest the worlds with thy splendours,

save the departed from that god whose nature is a mystery, and whose eyebrows are as the arms of the balance on the night when Aauit was weighed. . . . O Scarabæus god in thy bark, whose substance is self-originated, save the Osiris from those watchers to whom the Lord of spirits has entrusted the observation of his enemies, and from whose observations none can escape. Let me not fall under their swords, nor go to their blocks of execution; let me not remain in their abodes; let me not rest upon their beds [of torment]; let me not fall into their nets. Let naught befall me which the gods abhor.

We have not space for further illustrations of this most interesting work. It will be seen how this Funeral Ritual, or Book of the Dead, embodies the Egyptian doctrines of a future state, and the rewards and punishments of that after life.[1] But it will also be observed how thoroughly its theology is blended with all that is superstitious and degrading in a polytheistic mythology.

## The Koran.

The Mohammedan Bible is a comparatively modern book, and easily accessible to English readers.[2] It is about half the size of the Old Testament, and contains one hundred and fourteen chapters, called Suras. It is doubtful whether Mohammed ever learned to read or write. He dictated his revelations to his disciples, and they wrote them on date leaves, bits of parchment, tablets of white stone, and shoulder-blades of sheep. These were written during the last twenty years of the prophet's life, and a year after his death the different fragments were collected by his followers, and arranged according to the length of the chapters, beginning with the longest and ending with the shortest. So the book, as regards its contents, presents a strange medley, having no real beginning, middle, or end. And yet it is probably a faithful transcript of Mohammed's mind and heart as exhibited during the latter portion of his life. In some passages he seems to have been inspired with a holy zeal, and eloquently proclaims the glory of Almighty God, the merciful and compassionate. Other

General character.

[1] See J. P. Thompson's Article on the Egyptian Doctrine of a Future State, in the Bibliotheca Sacra, January, 1868, in which a fair analysis of the teachings of the Book of the Dead is given.

[2] Sale's English version of the Koran has been published in many forms, and his Preliminary Discourse is invaluable for the study of Islam. The translation of Rev. I. M. Rodwell (Lond., 1861) has the Suras arranged in chronological order. But the recent translation by E. H. Palmer (vols. vi and ix of Müller's Sacred Books of the East) is undoubtedly the best English version.

passages have the form and spirit of a bulletin of war.[1] In another he seems to make an apology for taking to himself an additional wife.[2] Another suggests a political manœuvre. But, on the whole, the Koran is a most tedious book to read. It is full of repetitions, and seems incapable of happy translation into any other language. Its crowning glory is its glowing Arabic diction. "Regarding it," says Palmer, "from a perfectly impartial and unbiassed standpoint, we find that it expresses the thoughts and ideas of a Bedawi Arab in Bedawi language and metaphor. The language is noble and forcible, but it is not elegant in the sense of literary refinement. To Mohammed's hearers it must have been startling from the manner in which it brought great truths home to them in the language of their everyday life."[3] Mohammed was wont to urge that the marvellous excellence of his book was a standing proof of its divine and superhuman origin. "If men and genii," says he, "united themselves together to bring the like of this Koran, they could not bring the like, though they should back each other up!"[4]

Life and claims of Mohammed.

The founder of Islam appears to have been from early life a contemplative soul. In the course of his travels as a merchant he probably often met and talked with Jews and Christians. The Koran contains on almost every page some allusion to Jewish history or Christian doctrine; but Mohammed's acquaintance with both Judaism and Christianity appears to have been formed from oral sources, and was confused with many vague and silly traditions. It should be observed, too, that at that period an earnest seeker after truth, under circumstances like those which tended chiefly to fashion Mohammed's mind and character, might very easily have become bewildered by the various traditions of the Jews and the foolish controversies of the Christians. The Church was then distracted with controversy over the Trinity and the use of images in worship. To Mohammed, a religion which filled its churches with images of saints was no better than a gross idolatry. His knowledge of Jesus was gathered largely from the apocryphal gospels and through Jewish channels. Hence we may understand the reason of the perverted form in which so many Christian ideas are treated in the Koran.

Mohammed claimed to be the last of six great apostles who had been sent upon divine missions into the world. Those six are

[1] Sura iii, 135–145; viii, xl. Comp. Muir, Life of Mahomet, vol. iii, p. 224.

[2] Sura xxxiii, 35–40; lxvi.

[3] The Qur'an. Translated by E. H. Palmer. Introduction, p. lxxvii.

[4] Koran, Sura xvii, 90.

Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Mohammed. Nothing specially new or original is to be found in the Moslem bible. It has been maintained that "Islam was little else than a republication of Judaism, with such modifications as suited it to Arabian soil, plus the important addition of the prophetic mission of Mohammed."[1] The following passage from the fifth Sura well illustrates the general style of the Koran:

[20] God's is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and what is between the two; he created what he will, for God is mighty over all!

But the Jews and the Christians say, "We are the sons of God and his beloved." Say, "Why then does he punish you for your sins?" nay, ye are mortals of those whom he has created! He pardons whom he pleases, and punishes whom he pleases; for God's is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, and what is between the two, and unto him the journey is.

O people of the book! our apostle has come to you, explaining to you the interval of apostles; lest ye say, "There came not to us a herald of glad tidings nor a warner." But there has come to you now a herald of glad tidings and a warner, and God is mighty over all!

When Moses said to his people, "O my people! remember the favour of God toward you when he made among you prophets, and made for you kings, and brought you what never was brought to any body in the worlds. O my people! enter the holy land which God has prescribed for you; and be ye not thrust back upon your hinder parts and retreat losers." [25] They said, "O Moses! verily, therein is a people, giants; and we will surely not enter therein until they go out from thence; but if they go out then we will enter in." Then said two men of those who fear,—God had been gracious to them both,—"Enter ye upon them by the door, and when ye have entered it, verily, ye shall be victorious; and upon God do ye rely if ye be believers." They said, "O Moses! we shall never enter it so long as they are therein; so, go thou and thy Lord and fight ye twain; verily, we will sit down here." Said he, "My Lord, verily, I can control only myself and my brother; therefore part us from these sinful people." He said, "Then, verily, it is forbidden them; for forty years shall they wander about in the earth; so vex not thyself for the sinful people."

[30] Recite to them the story of the two sons of Adam; truly when they offered an offering and it was accepted from one of them, and was not accepted from the other, that one said, "I will surely kill thee;" he said, "God only accepts from those who fear. If thou dost stretch forth to me thine hand to kill me, I will not stretch forth mine hand to kill thee; verily, I fear God the Lord of the worlds; verily, I wish that thou mayest draw upon thee my sin and thy sin, and be of the fellows of the fire, for that is the reward of the unjust." But his soul allowed him to slay his brother, and he slew him, and in the morning he was of those who lose. And God sent a crow to scratch in the earth and show him how he might

[1] Mohammed and Mohammedanism. Lectures by R. Bosworth Smith, p. 143. New York, 1875.

hide his brother's shame, he said, "Alas, for me! Am I too helpless to become like this crow and hide my brother's shame?" and in the morning he was of those who did repent.

[35] For this cause have we prescribed to the children of Israel that whoso kills a soul, unless it be for another soul or for violence in the land, it is as though he had killed men altogether; but whoso saves one, it is as though he saved men altogether.[1]

The one hundred and twelfth Sura is held in special veneration among the Mohammedans, and is popularly accounted equal in value to a third part of the entire Koran. It is said to have been revealed in answer to one who wished to know the distinguishing attributes of Mohammed's God. The following is Palmer's version:

In the name of the merciful and compassionate God
Say, He is God alone!
God the Eternal!
He begets not, and is not begotten!
Nor is there like unto him any one!

The following passage, from the beginning of the second Sura, is to be understood as the words of the Angel Gabriel to Mohammed, and showing him the character and importance of the Koran:

That is the book! there is no doubt therein; a guide to the pious, who believe in the unseen, and are steadfast in prayer, and of what we have given them expend in alms; who believe in what is revealed to thee, and what was revealed before thee, and of the hereafter they are sure. These are in guidance from their Lord, and these are the prosperous. Verily, those who misbelieve, it is the same to them if ye warn them or if ye warn them not, they will not believe. God has set a seal upon their hearts and on their hearing; and on their eyes is dimness, and for them is grievous woe. And there are those among men who say, "We believe in God and in the last day;" but they do not believe. They would deceive God and those who do believe; but they deceive only themselves and they do not perceive. In their hearts is a sickness, and God has made them still more sick, and for them is grievous woe because they lied. And when it is said to them, "Do not evil in the earth," they say, "We do but what is right." Are not they the evil doers? and yet they do not perceive. And when it is said to them, "Believe as other men believe," they say, "Shall we believe as fools believe?" Are not they themselves the fools? and yet they do not know. And when they meet those who believe, they say, "We do believe;" but when they go aside with their devils, they say, "We are with you; we were but mocking!" God shall mock at them and let them go on in their rebellion, blindly wandering on.[2]

[1] Palmer's translation, Part I., pp. 100–102.
[2] Ibid., pp. 2, 3.

The following, from the same Sura, is a specimen of the manner in which Mohammed garbles and presents incidents of Israelitish history:

Dost thou not look at the crowd of the children of Israel after Moses' time, when they said to a prophet of theirs, "Raise up for us a king, and we will fight in God's way?" He said, "Will ye perhaps, if it be written down for you to fight, refuse to fight?" They said, "And why should we not fight in God's way, now that we are dispossessed of our homes and sons?" But when it was written down for them to fight they turned back, save a few of them, and God knows who are evil doers. Then their prophet said to them, "Verily, God has raised up for you Talut as a king;" they said, "How can the kingdom be his over us; we have more right to the kingdom than he, for he has not an amplitude of wealth?" He said, "Verily, God has chosen him over you, and has provided him with an extent of knowledge and of form. God gives the kingdom unto whom he will; God comprehends and knows."

Then said to them their prophet, "The sign of his kingdom is that there shall come to you the ark with the shechinah in it from your Lord, and the relics of what the family of Moses and the family of Aaron left; the angels shall bear it." In that is surely a sign to you if ye believe.

Whatever opinion we may form of the Koran, or of Islam, it must be conceded that the man, who, like Mohammed, in one generation organized a race of savage tribes into a united people, founded an empire which for more than a thousand years has covered a territory as extensive as that of Rome in her proudest days, and established a religion which to-day numbers over a hundred million adherents, must have been an extraordinary character, and his life and works must be worthy of careful philosophic study. But it will also be conceded, by all competent to judge, that, as a volume of sacred literature, the Koran is very deficient in those elements of independence and originality which are noticeable in the sacred books of the other great religions of the world. The strict Mohammedans regard every syllable of the Koran as of a directly divine origin. "The divine revelation," observes Muir, "was the cornerstone of Islam. The recital of a passage formed an essential part of every celebration of public worship; and its private perusal and repetition was enforced as a duty and a privilege, fraught with the richest religious merit. This is the universal voice of early tradition, and may be gathered from the revelation itself. The Koran was accordingly committed to memory more or less by every adherent of Islam, and the extent to which it could be recited was reckoned one of the chief distinctions of nobility in the early Moslem empire. The custom of

Arabia favoured the task. Passionately fond of poetry, yet possessed of but limited means and skill in committing to writing the effusions of their bards, the Arabs had long been habituated to imprint them on the living tablets of their hearts. The recollective faculty was thus cultivated to the highest pitch; and it was applied with all the ardour of an awakened Arab spirit to the Koran. Several of Mohammed's followers, according to early tradition, could, during his lifetime, repeat with scrupulous accuracy the entire revelation."[1]

## The Eddas.

General character of the two Eddas.

Two ancient collections of Scandinavian poems and legends, known as the Elder and the Younger Edda, embody the mythology of the Teutonic tribes which settled in early times in the sea-girt lands of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway. From these tribes migrated also the ancient colonists of Iceland. To these old Norsemen the Eddas hold a position corresponding to that of the Vedas among the ancient Hindus, and the Avesta among the Persians.

In the old Norse language the word Edda means ancestress, or great-grandmother. Probably the poems and traditions so named were long perpetuated orally by the venerable mothers, who repeated them to their children and children's children at the blazing firesides of those northern homes. The Elder Edda, often called the Poetic Edda, consists of thirty-nine poems, and would nearly equal in size the books of Psalms and Proverbs combined. The Younger or Prose Edda is a collection of the myths of the Scandinavian deities, and furnishes to some extent a commentary on the older Edda, from the songs of which it quotes frequently. These interesting works were quite unknown to the learned world until the latter part of the seventeenth century. But it appears that the poems of the older Edda were collected about the beginning of the twelfth century by Saemund Sigfusson, an Icelandic priest, who, after pursuing classical and theological studies in the universities of France and Germany, returned to Iceland and settled in a village at the foot of Mount Hecla. Whether he collected these poems from oral tradition, or from runic manuscripts or inscriptions, is uncertain. A copy of this Edda on vellum, believed to date from the fourteenth century, was found in Iceland by Bishop Sveinsson in 1643, and was subsequently published under the title of The Edda of Saemund the Learned.[2] The prose Edda is ascribed to the celebrated Ice-

[1] The Life of Mahomet, vol. i. Introduction, p. 5. London, 1861.

[2] Edda Saemundar hins Froda, Copenhagen. 3 vols. 1787–1828. The third volume contains the Lexicon Mythologicum of Finn Magnusson.

landic historian, Snorri Sturlason (born 1178), who probably collected its several parts from oral tradition and other sources. The first copy known to Europeans was found by Jonsson in 1628, and the first complete edition was published by Rask, at Stockholm, in 1818.[1]

The first, and perhaps oldest, poem of the Elder Edda is entitled the Völuspa, that is, the Song of the Prophetess. It narrates in poetic form the creation of the universe and of man, the origin of evil, and how death entered into the world. It speaks of a future destruction and renovation of the universe, and of the abodes of bliss and woe. The prophetess thus begins her song:

The Völuspa.

1. All noble souls, yield me devout attention,
Ye high and low of Heimdall's race,[2]
I will All-Father's works make known,
The oldest sayings which I call to mind.

2. Of giants eight was I first born,
They reared me up from ancient times;
Nine worlds I know, nine limbs I know
Of that strong trunk within the earth.[3]

3. In that far age when Ymir[4] lived,
There was no sand, nor sea, nor saline wave;
Earth there was not, nor lofty heaven,
A yawning deep, but verdure none,

4. Until Bör's sons the spheres upheaved,
And they the mighty Midgard[5] formed.

[1] An English translation of the Poetic Edda was published by Benjamin Thorpe (Two parts, London, 1866), but is now out of print. Comp. Icelandic Poetry, or the Edda of Saemund translated into English verse by A. S. Cottle (Bristol, 1797). Many fragments of the lays are given in Anderson's Norse Mythology (Chicago, 1880). An English translation of the Prose Edda is given in Blackwell's edition of Mallet's Northern Antiquities (Bohn's Antiquarian Library). A new translation by R. B. Anderson has been published at Chicago (1880). A very complete and convenient German translation of both Eddas, with explanations by Karl Simrock, has passed through many editions (seventh improved edition, Stuttgart, 1878).

[2] Heimdall, according to the old Norse mythology, was the father and founder of the different classes of men, nobles, churls, and thralls.

[3] Referring to the great mundane ash-tree where the gods assemble every day in council. This tree strikes its roots through all worlds, and is thus described in the nineteenth verse of the Völuspa:

An ash I know named Yggdrasil,
A lofty tree wet with white mist,
Thence comes the dew which in the valleys falls;
Ever green it stands o'er the Urdar-fount.

[4] Ymir was the progenitor of the giants, and out of his body the world was created.

[5] The Prose Edda explains that the earth is round without, and encircled by the ocean, the outward shores of which were assigned to the race of giants. But around

The southern sun shone on the cliffs
And green the ground became with plants.

5. The southern sun, the moon's companion,
Held with right hand the steeds of heaven.
The sun knew not where she[1] might set,
The moon knew not what power he[1] had,
The stars knew not where they might dwell.

6. Then went the Powers to judgment seats,
The gods most holy held a council,
To night and new moon gave they names,
They named the morning and the midday,
And evening, to arrange the times.[2]

Another very interesting poem is the Grimnis-mal, or Lay of Grimner, in which we find a description of the twelve habitations of heavenly deities, by which some scholars understand the twelve signs of the zodiac. The sixth poem is called the Hava-mal, or Sublime Lay. It is an ethical poem, embodying a considerable collection of ancient Norse proverbs. The following passages, from Bishop Percy's prose translation, are specimens:

1. Consider and examine well all your doors before you venture to stir abroad: for he is exposed to continual danger, whose enemies lie in ambush concealed in his court.

3. To the guest, who enters your dwelling with frozen knees, give the warmth of your fire: he who hath travelled over the mountains hath need of food, and well-dried garments.

4. Offer water to him who sits down at your table; for he hath occasion to cleanse his hands: and entertain him honourably and kindly, if you would win from him friendly words and a grateful return.

5. He who travelleth hath need of wisdom. One may do at home whatsoever one will; but he who is ignorant of good manners will only draw contempt upon himself, when he comes to sit down with men well instructed.

7. He who goes to a feast, where he is not expected, either speaks with a lowly voice, or is silent; he listens with his ears, and is attentive with his eyes; by this he acquires knowledge and wisdom.

8. Happy he, who draws upon himself the applause and benevolence of men! for whatever depends upon the will of others, is hazardous and uncertain.

a portion of the inland Odin, Vile, and Ve, the sons of Bör, raised a bulwark against turbulent giants, and to the portion of the earth which it encircled they gave the name of Midgard. For this structure, it is said, they used the eyebrows of Ymir, of his flesh they formed the land, of his sweat and blood the seas, of his bones the mountains, of his hair the trees, of his brains the clouds, and of his skull the vault of heaven. See Mallet, Northern Antiquities, pp. 98, 405. Anderson, Norse Mythology, p. 175.

[1] In the Norse language, sun is feminine and moon is masculine.

[2] Translated from Simrock's German version of the Völuspa.

10. A man can carry with him no better provision for his journey than the strength of understanding. In a foreign country this will be of more use to him than treasures; and will introduce him to the table of strangers.

12–13. A man cannot carry a worse custom with him to a banquet than that of drinking too much; the more the drunkard swallows, the less is his wisdom, till he loses his reason. The bird of oblivion sings before those who inebriate themselves, and steals away their souls.[1]

We add a single extract from the Prose Edda, the account of the formation of the first human pair:

One day, as the sons of Bör were walking along the sea-beach they found two stems of wood, out of which they shaped a man and a woman. The first (Odin) infused into them life and spirit; the second (Vile) endowed them with reason and the power of motion; the third (Ve) gave them speech and features, hearing and vision. The man they called Ask, and the woman, Embla. From these two descend the whole human race, whose assigned dwelling was within Midgard. Then the sons of Bör built in the middle of the universe the city called Asgard, where dwell the gods and their kindred, and from that abode work out so many wondrous things, both on the earth and in the heavens above it. There is in that city a place called Hlidskjalf, and when Odin is seated there on his lofty throne he sees over the whole world, discerns all the actions of men, and comprehends whatever he contemplates. His wife is Frigga, the daughter of Fjörgyn, and they and their offspring form the race that we call the Æsir, a race that dwells in Asgard the old, and the regions around it, and that we know to be entirely divine. Wherefore Odin may justly be called All-Father, for he is verily the father of all, of gods as well as of men, and to his power all things owe their existence. Earth is his daughter and his wife, and with her he had his first-born son, Asa-Thor, who is endowed with strength and valour, and therefore quelleth he everything that hath life.[2]

In all the voluminous literature of the Greeks and the Romans we find no single work or collection of writings analogous to the above-named sacred books.[3] It would not be difficult to compile from Greek and Roman poets and philosophers a body of sacred literature which would compare favourably with that of any of the Gentile nations. But such a compilation would have, as a volume, no recognized authority or national significance. The books we have described, like our own Bible, have had a historical development, and a distinct place in the religious culture of great nations.

[1] See the whole poem as translated by Thorpe in Anderson's Norse Mythology, pp. 130–155, and the mysterious Runic section on pp. 254–259.

[2] Blackwell's translation, in Mallet, Northern Antiquities, pp. 405, 406.

[3] Whatever may have been the nature and contents of the old Sibylline Books, which were kept in the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus at Rome, they perished long ago, and their real character and use are now purely matters of conjecture.

The Koran, the Avesta, the Pitakas, and the Chinese classics embody the precepts and laws which have been a rule of faith to millions. The vedic hymns and the Egyptian ritual have directed the devotions of countless generations of earnest worshippers. They are, therefore, to be accounted sacred books, and are invaluable for the study of history and of comparative theology.[1]

These books must be studied as a whole.

In forming a proper estimate of these bibles of the nations, we must take each one as a whole. In the brief citations we have given above, the reader can only learn the general tone and spirit of the best portions of the several books. The larger part of all of them is filled with either untrustworthy legends, or grotesque fancies and vague speculations. They abound in polytheistic superstitions, incomprehensible metaphysics, and mythological tales. But, doubtless, back of all this mass of accumulated song and superstition and legend, there was once a foundation of comparatively pure worship and belief. Even Mohammed, whose life and works stand out in the light of reliable history, appears to have been, at the beginning of his career, an earnest seeker after truth and a zealous reformer. But afterward the pride of power and numerous victories warped his moral integrity, and later portions of the Koran are apologies for his crimes. It is difficult to see what logical connexion the superstitions of modern Taoism have with the teachings of Laotzse. In fact, the original documents and ideas of most of the great religions of the East appear to have become lost in the midst of the accretions of later times. Especially is this true of Brahmanism and Buddhism. Who can now certainly declare what were the very words of Buddha? The Tripitaka is an uncertain guide. It is much as if the apocryphal gospels, the legends of anchorites and monks and mystics, and the dreams of the schoolmen, were all strung together, and intermingled with the words and works of Jesus. Roman Catholicism is itself a gross corruption and caricature of the religion of Jesus Christ; and were it the sole representative of the Gospel in the world to-day it would be a striking analogue of Buddhism. Could we go back to the true historical starting point of the great religions, we would, perhaps, find them all, in one form and another,

[1] The Holy Scriptures of the Sikhs, a politico-religious sect of India, constitute a volume full of interest, and equal in size to the Old Testament. It is commonly known as the Granth. But it is a late work, compiled about A. D. 1500, and has no national or historical value to entitle it to a place among the bibles of the nations. It has been translated into English, and published at the expense of the British Government for India. See The Adi Granth, or the Holy Scriptures of the Sikhs, translated from the original Gurmukhi, with Introductory Essays, by Dr. Ernest Thrumpp. Lond., 1877.

connected with some great patriarchal Jethro, or Melchizedek, whose name and genealogy are now alike lost to mankind.

It will not do to take up the various bibles of the world, and, having selected choice extracts from them all, compare such selections alone with similar extracts from the Christian and Jewish Scriptures. These latter, we doubt not, can furnish more exquisite passages than all the others combined. But such comparison of choice excerpts is no real test. Each bible must be taken as an organic whole, and viewed in its historical and national relations. Then will it be seen, as one crowning glory of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, that they are the carefully preserved productions of some sixteen centuries, self-verifying in their historical relations, and completed and divinely sanctioned by the Founder of Christianity and his apostles in the most critical and cultivated age of the Roman Empire. All attempts to resolve these sacred books into myths and legends have proved signal failures. The Hebrew people were notably a peculiar people, and their national history stands out in the clear light of trustworthy testimony. They were placed, geographically, in the very center of the great historic empires of Egypt, Asia, and Europe; and the accuracy of their sacred records is confirmed by the records of these empires. Most notable is the fact, moreover, that the languages in which the several parts of the sacred canon were written ceased to be living tongues about the time when those several parts obtained canonical authority; and thereby these sacred books were crystallized into imperishable form, and have become historical and linguistic monuments of their own genuineness. We are, furthermore, confident in the assertion that the Holy Scriptures are not only singularly free from the superstitions and follies that abound in the sacred books of other nations, but also that they contain in substance the inculcation of every excellence and virtue to be found in all the others. Thus in their entirety they are incomparably superior to all other sacred books.[1]

Notable superiority of the Old and New Testament Scriptures.

But, taken in parts, the Bible will still maintain a marvellous superiority. Where, in all other literature, will be found a moral code comparable, for substance and historical presentation, with the Sinaitic decalogue? Where else is there such a golden sum-

[1] "It cannot be too strongly stated," says Max Müller, "that the chief, and in many cases the only, interest of the Sacred Books of the East is historical; that much in them is extremely childish, tedious, if not repulsive; and that no one but the historian will be able to understand the important lessons which they teach." Sacred Books of the East, vol. i, p. xliii.

mary of all law and revelation as the first and second commandments of the Saviour? The religious lessons of the Bible are set in a historical background of national life and personal experience; and largely in biographical sketches true to all the phases of human character.[1] Let the diligent student go patiently and carefully through all rival scriptures; let him memorize the noblest vedic hymns, and study the Tripitaka with all the enthusiasm of an Edwin Arnold; let him search the Confucian classics, and the Tauteh-king of Laotsze, and the sacred books of Persia, Assyria, and Babylon; let him devoutly peruse Egyptian ritual, Moslem Koran, and Scandinavian Eddas; he yet will find in the Psalms of David a beauty and purity infinitely superior to any thing in the Vedas; in the gospels of Jesus a glory and splendour eclipsing the boasted "Light of Asia;" and in the laws of Moses and the Proverbs of Solomon lessons of moral and political wisdom far in advance of any thing that Laotsze and Confucius offer. By such study and comparisons it will be seen, as not before, how, as a body of laws, history, poetry, prophecy, and religious records, the Bible is most emphatically the Book of books, and, above all other books combined, "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." Such study will dissipate the notion that Christianity is equivalent to general goodness, and that the Bible is an accident of human history; for it will be seen that the Gospel system essentially excludes all other religions, and evinces a divine right to supersede them all. The written records of other faiths are of the earth and earthy; the Bible is a heavenly gift, in language and history wonderfully prepared, and accompanied by manifold evidences of being the revelation of God. To devotees of other religions the Christian may truly say, in the words of the Lord Jesus (John iv, 22): "Ye worship what ye know not, we worship what we know, for the salvation is from the Jews."

[1] Tayler Lewis observes: "Every other assumed revelation has been addressed to but one phase of humanity. They have been adapted to one age, to one people, or one peculiar style of human thought. Their books have never assumed a cosmical character, or been capable of any catholic expansion. They could never be accommodated to other ages, or acclimated to other parts of the world. They are indigenous plants that can never grow out of the zone that gave them birth. Zoroaster never made a disciple beyond Persia, or its immediate neighborhood; Confucius is wholly Chinese, as Socrates is wholly Greek." The Divine Human in the Scripture, p. 133. New York, 1859.